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General and complete disarmament: convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament

Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. On 20 November 2000, the General Assembly adopted resolution 55/33 M, entitled "Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament", paragraph 2 of which reads as follows:

> "*Requests* the Secretary-General to seek the views of States Members of the United Nations on the objectives, agenda and timing of the special session and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session."

2. Pursuant to that request, the Secretary-General, on 4 April 2001, addressed a note verbale to Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are reproduced in chapter II below. Any other replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

A. Bangladesh

[Original: English]
[11 May 2000]

Bangladesh calls for an early convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Despite the fact that the United Nations Disarmament Commission was unable to reach a consensus on the objectives and the agenda for the fourth special session, Bangladesh considers it important to continue the search for a consensus in the appropriate forum. We continue to believe that nuclear disarmament should remain the highest priority for us. In the context of the emerging challenges in the area of international security and disarmament in the post-cold war era, an agreed plan of action to deal with these in the true spirit of multilateralism remains an enduring objective for the fourth special session. Bangladesh believes that only a special session of the General Assembly can address the broad subject of disarmament, taking into account in particular its relationship to development, with the comprehensiveness and thoroughness it deserves.

B. Brunei Darussalam

[Original: English]
[11 June 2001]

1. Brunei Darussalam welcomes the proposal and initiative to hold the special session aimed at strengthening the coordinating work on issues pertaining to disarmament. These efforts are in line with Brunei Darussalam's position, as a peace-loving nation. Brunei Darussalam believes that the special session will give the opportunity for all Member States to actively participate in the search for means to address various disarmament issues. Of particular importance, the special session will undertake a review of the objectives and measures that have been or should be taken.

2. Brunei Darussalam does not have any suggestion for topics to be included in the agenda for the special session but would agree that the issue of the relationship

between disarmament and development should be included. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the proposed agenda will aim at meeting the objectives of general and complete disarmament.

C. Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[14 June 2001]

The relevant Lebanese authorities have no views to convey on the objectives of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in view of the fact that Lebanon does not possess any weapons of mass destruction. It strongly supports the agreements on disarmament and arms limitation, and it will participate in the international efforts being made to achieve these objectives.

D. Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[16 May 2001]

1. Mexico attaches great importance to the special sessions of the General Assembly held in 1978, 1982 and 1988 for a comprehensive review of the situation of disarmament, arms control and international security.

2. In 1994, Mexico expressed its support for the proposal contained in General Assembly resolution 49/75 I for the convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly on this topic and gave its backing to General Assembly resolution 55/33 M entitled "Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament".

3. Mexico believes that consultations should begin on the aims and agenda of this special session, the convening of which will be debated at the next session of the General Assembly. In this process account should be taken of the work of the 1999 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

E. Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[22 May 2001]

Views of Qatar on the objectives, agenda and timing of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament

Review and appraisal, first of all, of past implementation of relevant resolutions.

Rectification and remedying of shortcomings, if any.

Elaboration of a programme to be implemented in stages beginning with nuclear disarmament, as a first priority, before moving on to subsequent stages.

A clear commitment and an assurance from all, during the special session, concerning the implementation of agreements in this domain.

F. Russian Federation

[Original: Russian]
[16 May 2001]

1. The Russian Federation considers it a matter of urgency to hold a special session with a view to discussing practical means of resolving current aspects of the strengthening of strategic stability, further limiting the arms race, including preventing it from spreading to new areas, the consolidation and development of non-proliferation regimes for weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, and the development of substantive legal and contractual foundation in the field of disarmament.

2. The Russian Federation is ready to support the early holding of such a session.

G. Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]
[17 May 2001]

1. The Syrian Arab Republic supports the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in order to consider and appraise the implementation of the outcome of the 1978 first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and so as to provide an opportunity to review, from a perspective more in tune with the current international situation, the most critical aspects of the process of disarmament and to mobilize the international community and public opinion in favour of the elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and of the control and reduction of conventional weapons.

2. While the Syrian Arab Republic supports the convening of the session, it stresses the importance of the international community having the sincere political will to implement the decisions of the first special session as showing the way towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and the achievement of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. In view of the fact that no consensus was reached at the second and third special sessions, the Syrian Arab Republic believes that the adoption by the General Assembly of a consensus resolution on this important subject would reflect the genuine desire of the international community for the session and thus the importance of establishing the earliest possible date for its convening.

3. The results of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons confirm the need for the fourth special session devoted to disarmament to focus on the priorities of the international community with respect to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and on the establishment of a precise timetable for that purpose.